



# POLICY BRIEF

POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK  
OCTOBER 2022

## Integrating the sustainable use objective of the CBD in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

Halving our global footprint through sustainable production and consumption and circular economy

### SUMMARY

The way in which we produce and consume our world's natural resources is a key underlying cause of biodiversity loss. To halt and reverse biodiversity's decline, the sustainable use objective of the CBD must be adequately reflected in the goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (post-2020 GBF).

The post-2020 GBF should ensure that **production and consumption are in line with the objective of sustainably using biodiversity**, through the adoption of sustainable production and consumption and circular economy principles in **economic and productive sectors**. In this way biodiversity will be mainstreamed into these key sectors.

Collective action at the global level can incentivise a **just transition** of productive sectors, business and financial institutions, that supports jobs and livelihoods while protecting and restoring nature. To make this happen, international financial support, including ODA, and technical support for developing countries must be significantly increased. It is critical to ensure that all financial flows are aligned with the objective of halting and reversing biodiversity loss, that harmful subsidies are removed or repurposed and there are adequate domestic resources mobilised for biodiversity.

### WWF recommendations

*At the Goal level:*

Goal B should set an outcome goal for 2030 on sustainable use, with the level of ambition necessary to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and put us on a pathway to the 2050 vision.

**WWF suggests to include in Goal B the following wording:**

***“...the global footprint [of production and consumption] [on biodiversity] is halved by 2030 and remains within planetary boundaries afterwards, for the benefits of all current and future generations,...”***

This sets a desired **global** outcome that takes into account and addresses consumption patterns that are currently highly unequal, and ensures we achieve the sustainable use objective of the Convention **for nature as well as current and future generations**.

*At the Target level:*

A 2030 sustainable use outcome must be supported by a set of 2030 action targets to ensure that the global footprint will be halved. These should identify key sectors and levers for transformative change, resonate with relevant stakeholders and sectors to trigger collective action, and create synergies with other agreements and processes, and ensure that financial flows support the transition.

**WWF suggests to include transformative 2030 action targets** on sustainable use, that:

1. **Transform key productive sectors**, through:
  - a. Target 10: applying **agroecological principles** and ecosystem approaches,
  - b. Target 16: ensuring access & adoption of **sustainable and healthy diets**,
  - c. Target 1: identifying actions needed from the **infrastructure and mining** sectors,
  - d. Target 5: avoiding **overexploitation** and minimizing impacts on **non-target species/bycatch** (covering fisheries and forestry), and
  - e. Target 15: scaling up **circular economy** (covering manufacturing and all sectors).
2. **Transform business and financial institutions**, through:
  - a. Target 15: **setting the right ambition for businesses - i.e. avoiding negative impacts, halving the footprint and becoming nature positive**, immediately implementing **deforestation and conversion free supply chains**, and ensuring that all business and financial institutions **assess and disclose their dependencies and impacts** and set science-based biodiversity related **targets**.
3. **Transform financial flows**, through:
  - a. Target 14: **aligning all public and private flows** with biodiversity objectives,
  - b. Target 18: identifying, eliminating or repurposing **harmful subsidies**, and
  - c. Target 19.1: increasing **domestic and international resources for biodiversity**, including ODA.
  - d. Target 19.2: **capacity building**, technology and technical & scientific cooperation.
4. **Secure collective sectoral action**, through:
  - a. Target 14: identifying **all productive sectors with high impacts** on biodiversity,
  - b. Section B.bis or I. Enabling conditions: developing and implementing: develop and implement **sector-specific plans of action** at national, regional and global levels and national **multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral processes**.

Without the ambitious commitments and transformative actions on sustainable use outlined above, we will not be able to achieve the CBD's objectives on conservation and access and benefit sharing. A just transition presents many opportunities for new and sustainable growth. It can create green jobs that contribute significantly to poverty eradication and health gains and ensure that we achieve an environmentally sustainable economy that is essential to the wellbeing of current and future generations.

This brief provides explanations on proposed wording options and, in the Annex, offers background information on the level of ambition, feasibility, equity, measurability, synergies and opportunities of a 2030 outcome to halve the footprint of production and consumption.

## I. Ambitious sustainable use commitments and transformative actions are necessary

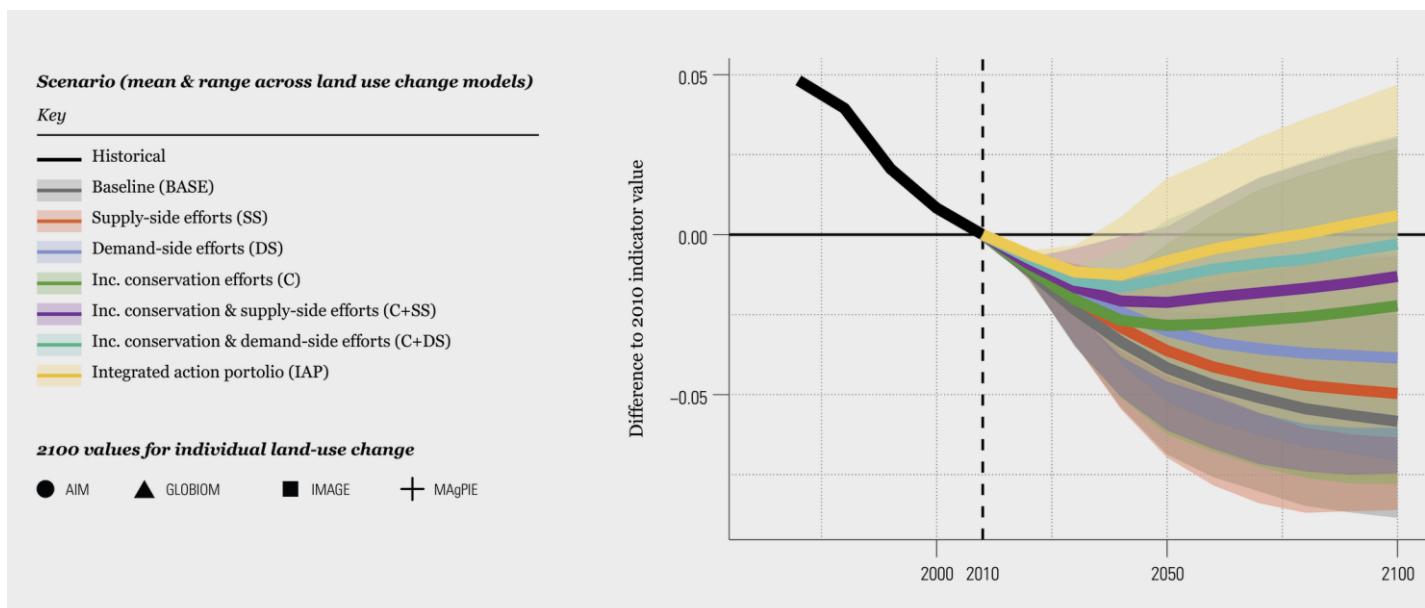
Sustainable use (of biodiversity and its components) is defined by IPBES as: *the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.*

Addressing overexploitation of animals, plants and other organisms via harvesting, logging, hunting and fishing promotes sustainable use. Another vital way to promote sustainable use is through addressing current patterns of production and consumption. These use resources at a rate that exceeds the planet's capacity for regeneration, and negatively impact our natural environment through waste and pollution.

As many Parties have underlined, all three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity should be addressed in a balanced way in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF). Without ambitious commitments and transformative actions on sustainable use, we will not be able to achieve the Convention's objectives of conservation and access and benefits sharing.

As the graph below shows, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, there is a need for an **integrated action portfolio** (IAP) which includes both **increased conservation efforts** (C) as well as ambitious and transformative **action addressing unsustainable production** (supply-side efforts, SS) **and consumption** (demand-side efforts, DS).

*Projected contributions of various efforts to reverse biodiversity trends from land-use change<sup>1</sup>*



<sup>1</sup> Leclère, D., Obersteiner, M., Barrett, M., Butchart, S. H. M., Chaudhary, A., et al. (2020). Bending the curve of terrestrial biodiversity needs: an integrated strategy, *Nature*, 585, 551–556 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2705-y>

The [IPBES Global Assessment](#), [Global Biodiversity Outlook 5](#) as well as the [experts' inputs to the OEWG3](#) are also very clear on the need to address unsustainable production and consumption.

## II. Adequately integrating the sustainable use objective in the post-2020 GBF

A key ingredient, to ensure the post-2020 GBF delivers the necessary major progress toward the sustainable use objective of the Convention, is a robust outcome element, at the Goal level, that is:

- ❖ *Based on evidence and the best science available*: science is clear - urgent and transformative action is needed.
- ❖ *Identifies where we need to be in 2030*: sets an outcome objective.
- ❖ *Ambitious enough* to ensure that by 2030 biodiversity loss is halted and reversed, as agreed at the High Level segment of COP15.1 in the [Kunming Declaration](#);
- ❖ *Ensuring equity* during implementation and delivering benefits for both current and future generations. Highly unequal levels of consumption, different responsibilities, and the need for a just transition to sustainable production and capacity building and technical support among countries need to be taken fully into account when setting national efforts.
- ❖ *Easy to communicate*, making sustainable use visible and understandable by both decision-makers and the general public, while also triggering action.
- ❖ *Achievable*, by ensuring it is supported by achievable targets, focusing on key related transformative actions.
- ❖ *Building synergies*, In particular with the SDGs and the UNFCCC, to maximize impact by aligning levels of ambition, and ensuring that a GBF package on sustainable use will also contribute to achieve sustainable development and climate objectives.
- ❖ *Measurable*, as it should be possible to track progress in the implementation.

To address all the critical criteria above, **WWF suggests to include in Goal B** of the post-2020 GBF the following wording:

***“...the global footprint [of production and consumption] [on biodiversity] is halved by 2030 and remains within planetary boundaries afterwards, for the benefits of all current and future generations,...”***

WWF suggests including this outcome element in Goal B given its focus on the sustainable use objective of the CBD.

We suggest using the concept of **footprint** as it is easily understandable by decision-makers and the broader public and can be measured (see Annex for more details).

Wording referring to “**production and consumption**” and to “**biodiversity**” may be added to enhance clarity and specificity but will make it less concise.

A clear focus on the “**global**” footprint is essential to fully take into account that today’s global consumption is well beyond planetary boundaries. Additional wording on “**current and future generations**” reflects the highly unequal levels of consumption, responsibilities and capacity among

countries and the need to achieve global goals **equitably**. A **just transition** to sustainable production and a circular economy needs to be incentivised while supporting jobs and livelihoods and protecting ecosystems. Supportive measures to producer countries may include providing incentives, sharing of technical expertise, and ensuring access to finance and markets along with other support schemes for smallholder farmers and small-scale fishers.

To make clearer the sustainable use pathway between 2030 and the 2050 Vision, WWF suggests adding: “**and remains within planetary boundaries afterwards**”(i.e. after 2030). To facilitate compromise, if some Parties express concerns on the concept of “planetary boundaries”, the phrase “**well within safe ecological limits**” could be used. This is agreed language included in Aichi targets 4 and 6.

However, setting a 2030 outcome is not enough. It should be supported by a set of 2030 actions to ensure that the global footprint will be halved that:

- ❖ Identify key sectors and levers for transformative change.
- ❖ Are easy to understand outside the CBD.
- ❖ Resonate with relevant stakeholders and sectors and their related fora and trigger collective action.

*Main transformative actions<sup>2</sup> to be included in the post-2020 GBF targets to halve the global footprint by 2030*

KEY PRODUCTIVE SECTORS TRANSFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Apply <b>agroecological principles</b> and ecosystem approaches (target 10)</li> <li>❖ Access &amp; adoption of sustainable and healthy <b>diets</b> (target 16)</li> <li>❖ Avoid <b>overexploitation</b> and minimize impacts on <b>non-target species/by-catch</b>, covering fisheries and forestry (target 5)</li> <li>❖ Identifying actions needed from the <b>infrastructure and mining</b> sectors (target 1)</li> <li>❖ <b>Circular economy</b>, covering manufacturing and all sectors (target 15)</li> </ul>
TRANSFORMING BUSINESSES AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Set the right ambition: <b>avoiding negative impacts, halving the footprint and becoming nature positive</b> (target 15)</li> <li>❖ Immediately implement <b>deforestation and conversion free supply chains</b> (target 15)</li> <li>❖ Ensuring all business and financial institutions <b>assess and disclose</b> their dependencies and impacts and set science-based biodiversity related targets (target 15)</li> </ul>
TRANSFORMING FINANCIAL FLOWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Align of all public and private flows</b> with biodiversity objectives (target 14)</li> <li>❖ Identify, eliminate or repurpose <b>harmful subsidies</b> (target 18)</li> <li>❖ Increase <b>domestic and international resources for biodiversity</b>, including ODA (target 19.1)</li> <li>❖ <b>Capacity building</b>, technology and technical &amp; scientific cooperation (target 19.2)</li> </ul>
SECURING SECTORAL COLLECTIVE ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Identify all sectors</b> (target 14)</li> <li>❖ Develop and implement <b>sector-specific plans</b> of action at national, regional and global levels and national <b>multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral processes</b> (B.bis or enabling conditions)</li> </ul>

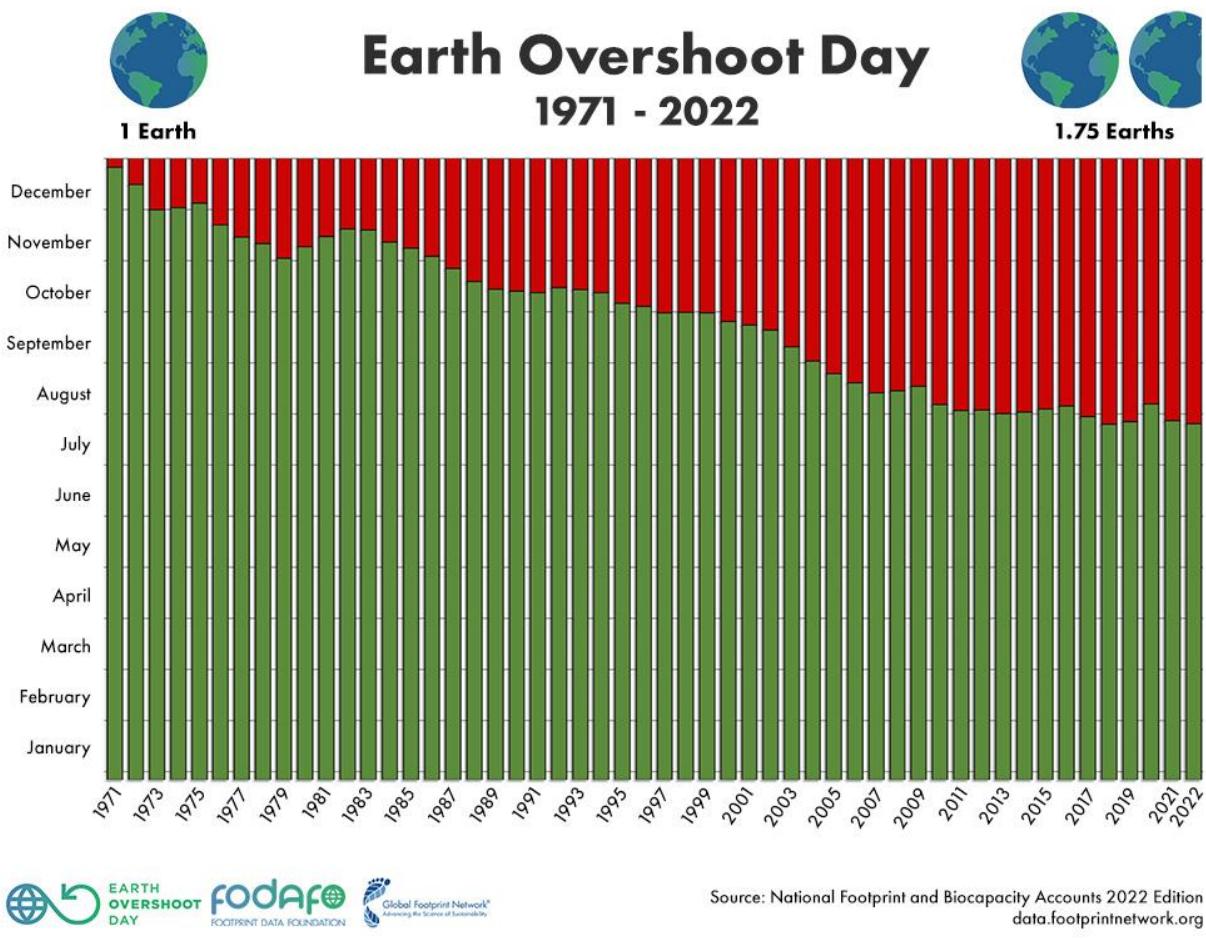
<sup>2</sup> Please note that here we focus on key transformative actions. Post-2020 targets include a number of critical outcome elements, including on pollution and overconsumption, that also contribute to sustainable use and should be retained.

The suggested Goal B element on halving the footprint and transformative action targets will be the key ingredients of a successful sustainable use package that will deliver major progress on the second objective of the CBD. To enable implementation, and support a just transition of productive sectors, the GBF must also provide transformational **resource mobilisation** for biodiversity: international financial support, including ODA, and capacity building and technical support for developing countries must be significantly increased. At the same time all financial flows must be aligned with the objective of halting and reversing biodiversity loss, harmful subsidies removed or repurposed and domestic resources for biodiversity adequately mobilised.

## ANNEX: Background information on: ambition, achievability and measurability

### A. What's the current trend, situation and level of ambition needed?

*Evolution of Earth Overshoot Day (1971-2022)*



*In red: months when humanity is using biological resources beyond those that the Earth regenerates during the entire year.*

It is clear that, **no matter the metric/methodology used, our global footprint is well beyond planetary boundaries and it is not going in the right direction**. Our growing footprint increases the risk of large-scale abrupt or irreversible environmental changes, exposing nature and people to unpredictable impacts. Therefore, **the only level of ambition possible is to reduce our footprint as fast as possible to return within safe limits**.

*Current levels of unsustainable production and consumption, planetary boundaries and reduction required to return within safe environmental limits*

FOOTPRINT CONCEPT/METRICS	CURRENT LEVEL	PLANETARY BOUNDARY <sup>3</sup>	REDUCTION REQUIRED
<b>Ecological Footprint</b>	2.7 gha (2021) <sup>4</sup>	1.5 gha	- 44.4%
<b>Embodied Human Appropriation of Net Primary Production</b>	4 tons C (2007) <sup>5</sup>	2.62 tons C	- 35%
<b>Material footprint</b>	92 billion tonnes (2017)	50 billion tonnes	- 46%
<b>Material footprint per capita</b>	12.2 tonnes per capita (2017) <sup>6</sup>	below ~6.5 tonnes per capita <sup>7</sup>	- 47%
<b>Nitrogen Boundary</b>	19.3 kg N (2020 estimate) <sup>8</sup>	8.9 kg N	- 54%
<b>CO2 footprint</b>	4,48 tons CO2 (2018) <sup>9</sup>	1.61 tons of CO2	- 64%

**WWF suggests that the global footprint should be halved as:**

- **Footprint metrics show the need to reduce the global footprint in the 40-60% range;**
- We should expect that some of the reductions required highlighted in the table above (e.g. on material footprint) will be **higher when 2020 data will be available;**
- We need to take into account **population evolution** until 2030.

## B. Achievability

Halving the global footprint can be achieved by 2030 by taking transformative actions in key areas, notably those identified in the main text above.

For example, WWF research shows that, **by moving to sustainable, healthy (notably, safe and diversified) and culturally appropriate diets, agricultural land use can be reduced by at least**

<sup>3</sup> All values mentioned in this table, except those with specific footnotes, are based on O'Neill, D. W., Fanning, A. L., Lamb, W. F., & Steinberger, J. K. (2018). A good life for all within planetary boundaries. *Nature sustainability*, 1(2), 88-95.

<sup>4</sup> Ecological footprint based on 2021 data. Source: <https://www.overshootday.org/content/uploads/2021/07/Earth-Overshoot-Day-2021-Nowcast-Report.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Kastner, T., Erb, K. H., & Haberl, H. (2015). Global Human Appropriation of Net Primary Production for Biomass Consumption in the European Union, 1986-2007. *Journal of industrial ecology*, 19(5), 825–836.

<sup>6</sup> Data based on Oberle, B., Bringezu, S., Hatfield-Dodds, S., Hellweg, S., Schandl, H., & Clement, J. (2019). *Global Resources Outlook: 2019*. International Resource Panel, United Nations Envio.

<sup>7</sup> Based on an estimated global population of 8.5 billion people.

<sup>8</sup> Calculation from: FAO. 2019. World fertilizer trends and outlook to 2022. Rome, <https://www.fao.org/3/ca6746en/ca6746en.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Source:

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.CO2E.PC&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1638351410647000&usg=AOvVaw3lxtrDqSeH-CrMjz4n-nOT>

**41% and wildlife loss can be reduced by up to 46%** (while reducing premature deaths by at least 20%). Transformative actions in other key areas such as agricultural production, infrastructure and fisheries are equally impactful.

The feasibility of halving the global footprint by 2030 becomes even clearer when looking into specific country actions. For example, WWF together with 3Keel produced a [study](#) that shows how the **UK can achieve a reduction of its footprint of production and consumption by three quarters by 2030 through the implementation of specific and feasible action targets.**

Moreover, **national efforts** should take into account each country's different levels of consumption and, therefore, levels of efforts required to achieve the global objective of halving the footprint.

All countries need to return or remain within levels of consumption that are in line with global planetary boundaries. The average per capita material footprint should be below ~6.5 tonnes per capita. The table below shows the average per capita material footprint, for groups of countries based on their level of income.

*Table: The material footprint per capita, by level of income*

Group of countries, by income level	<u>Material footprint per capita in 2017 (tonnes)</u>
High income countries	26.3
Upper middle income countries	16.9
Lower middle income countries	4.6
Low income countries	2

The level of consumption of developed countries and its impact on global biodiversity, also provide a strong justification on ODA for biodiversity and the need to increase it significantly.

## C. Measuring progress

First of all, based on Aichi Target's lesson learned, in order to ensure progress can be measured (and success achieved) the global footprint objective should be SMART and include numerical values (halving).

A number of indicators are already available, with each of them having advantages and disadvantages.

*Existing indicators with pro's and con's*

<b>Ecological Footprint</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very well known &amp; very <b>good communication tool</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Methodology available</b>;</li> <li>• Take into account the trade <b>dimension</b>: imports are accounted but not exports;</li> <li>• <b>Data available</b> for most countries with different data series covering several years;</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calculation of biocapacity <b>not based on planetary boundaries</b> and can increase through <b>unsustainable practices</b>;</li> <li><b>Challenges on how fisheries and forestry are measured</b>;</li> <li>Does not account the impact of <b>tourism</b> and other exported services.</li> </ul>
<b>Embodied Human Appropriation of Net Primary Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take into account the <b>trade dimension</b>: imports are accounted for but not exports;</li> <li><b>Not widely used</b> and therefore it is not calculated frequently;</li> <li>Important <b>definitional and measurement issues</b> to be solved;</li> <li>Does not account <b>tourism</b> and other exported services impact.</li> </ul>
<b>Material footprint</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Part of the SDGs monitoring framework</b>, methodology reviewed and agreed by the UN Statistical Commission;</li> <li><b>Data available</b></li> <li><b>Focus on final consumption</b> in a country, therefore take into account <b>trade dimension</b> (include countries imports but not exports) and account <b>tourism</b> and other services impacts where they take place;</li> <li><b>Sums up all types of materials consumed</b> based on their weight <b>no matter the actual impact on nature</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Nitrogen Boundary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partial</li> </ul>
<b>Phosphorus Boundary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partial</li> </ul>
<b>CO2 footprint</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses impacts on climate, partial</li> </ul>

Existing indicators (material footprint per capita, ecological footprint), while acknowledging their limitations, can be used as a proxy to measure progress from the beginning of the GBF implementation.

However, in the medium term, a better footprint indicator/index may be developed. This indicator would:

- Ensure progress within the GBF context is adequately measured;
- Be peer reviewed and internationally agreed;
- Be implementable by all Parties;
- Focus on biodiversity impacts;
- Cover both production and consumption and take into account trade of goods and services;
- Need to capture the equity dimension;

This e.g. could be built on [promising research on extinction risk footprint](#). In addition, it could be used beyond the CBD, e.g. for the sustainable development agenda after 2030.

Adequate support for building capacity in measuring progress on the implementation of the GBF will need to be provided. In addition, a **pragmatic approach could be adopted** as Parties that have a per capita material footprint below a certain level (significantly lower to the planetary boundary), could be allowed to use only the material footprint per capita to report. This would have the major advantage of not requiring any additional efforts as this indicator is already part of the SDGs monitoring framework.

## D. Building synergies and unlocking key opportunities

The proposed level of reduction of the global footprint, would be in line with:

1. The **SDG 12**, that aims to “ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns” by 2030 (e.g. by halving food waste); and
2. The level of ambition of **UNFCCC** that aims to reduce GHG emissions by 50% by 2030.

This would contribute to building synergies and ensure that actions on sustainable development under the 2030 Agenda and actions on climate under the UNFCCC, reinforce each other.

In addition, addressing unsustainable production and consumption is not only necessary to reverse biodiversity loss but **will bring many other benefits for people**. A Dalberg report commissioned by WWF shows that halving the global footprint will bring major positive impacts for people's health and jobs, national economies and economic growth as well as more resources for governments.

### ***Opportunities deriving from halving the global footprint of production and consumption***

1. **Reduced land use:** Shifting to healthy and sustainable diets alone can reduce agricultural land-use by at least 41% while providing nutritious food for all;
2. **Improved health:** Prevent 2 millions premature deaths per year thanks to more healthy, sustainable diets and reduced risks of pandemics caused by zoonotic diseases;
3. **Job opportunities:** at least 39 million nature positive jobs created if governments reallocated just one year worth of subsidies that harm biodiversity<sup>10</sup> to a nature positive stimulus instead.
4. **Nature positive economy:** a circular economy can add USD 4.5 trillions to global GDP by 2030, and a nature positive economy can add USD 10 trillion in economic value.
5. **More resources for governments:** USD 500 billion in healthcare costs arising from diabetes alone avoided, and money spent on harmful subsidies available to be reallocated.

### **For more information**

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<sup>10</sup> Using the lower estimate of USD 500 billion.